

Solid Waste Advisory Committee
Minutes of Special Meeting
Video Conference
June 30, 2020

Present: Julie Sherman, Pene Williams, Susan Spak, Rita Kornblum, Ted Busky, Virginia Walton (staff)

The meeting was called to order at 5:37 pm by Chairperson Sherman.

The February 18, 2020 meeting minutes were approved on a motion by Kornblum/Williams.

Walton reported that in February the Sustainability Committee met with members of the school building committee and new school building architects to discuss the net zero energy school design. One of the recommendations from the Sustainability Committee was to look into deconstructing Southeast Elementary School rather than demolishing it in order to conserve resources and save money. On a motion by Busky/Sherman, SWAC joined with the Sustainability Committee in asking that the school building committee investigate the viability of lining up reuse and recycle markets for Southeast Schools' building material in order to reduce waste.

The swap shop is currently closed without a plan to reopen. Members looked at the procedures that WAIM has for reopening and suggested similar actions - limiting the number of people inside the building, requiring masks, keeping donated items in a separate area for a period of time before placing out - in order to safely offer this service to residents. Members asked that a Swap shop subcommittee meet, with an invitation to transfer station staff and swap shop volunteers, to develop a reopening plan for town management to review and to work on the new swap shop building design and function.

Because of COVID-19 Walton has been discussing with co-workers the logistics of moving the four school's on-site composting to the transfer station leaf pile in the fall. CT DEEP is reviewing the request. Managing all four schools' food scraps at a centralized location has the advantage of maintaining higher heat and using one piece of equipment rather than four.

Walton reported that she has been on webinars and virtual discussion groups about plastic pollution over the past few months. Federal senate bill 3263 and house bill 5845, named the Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act, addresses the concerns SWAC has been raising about plastics recycling, contamination and pollution. The bill focuses on extended producer responsibility of packaging, bans exports of plastic waste and establishes a national container deposit law modelled after Oregon's deposit bill. Senator Blumenthal is a co-sponsor, but Senator Murphy and Representative Courtney are not. Kornblum stated that the State plastic bag charge has been reactivated. Walton will find out if the Mansfield Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance is still suspended. With the virus, there is a push to use single-use items. On the website, Beyond Plastic, is a letter to businesses asking them to allow patrons to use reusable bags and containers. The letter includes the statement from health officials. Walton will send the draft letter for their review so that it can be discussed at the next meeting.

Agenda item for next meeting - litter from free newspaper deliveries, review letter to businesses.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 21, 2020. The meeting was adjourned at 6:31 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Virginia Walton